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UNCLAS VILNIUS 000627

SIPDIS

STATE PASS TO EUR/NB (MGERMANO), EUR/NCE (MSESSUMS),
EUR/RPM (SWANDERSON) AND PM/PPA (SKWAK)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MCAP](#) [MARR](#) [PREF](#) [PGOV](#) [LH](#) [AF](#) [HR](#)

SUBJECT: LITHUANIA SEEKS USG ASSISTANCE ON TWO PRT ISSUES

REF: VILNIUS 609

11. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 6.

12. (U) SUMMARY: The GOL has requested USG assistance in concluding an agreement with the Government of Afghanistan to establish a Lithuanian Special Mission. This agreement is a necessary precondition for the deployment of civilians to Afghanistan to join the brand-new, Lithuanian-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Ghour province (reftel). Lithuania looks for the USG to encourage the GOA to move swiftly to effect this agreement. On another PRT issue, Lithuania seeks U.S. diplomatic support to encourage the Government of Croatia to participate in the PRT. END SUMMARY.

LITHUANIA MOVES TO ESTABLISH SPECIAL MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

13. (U) The MFA proposes to initiate an exchange of letters with the Government of Afghanistan by which the GOA would invite and the GOL would agree to establish a Special Mission in Afghanistan. An appendix to the letters constitutes an agreement on the status of PRT personnel. (Text of the agreement and appendix to follow by email.) Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis signed a diplomatic note on June 14 to be forwarded to the Afghan Embassy in Warsaw, with copies to the Afghan Embassy in Washington and the Afghan Mission to the UN, to initiate this process. Lithuanian law precludes sending civilians on assignment to Afghanistan without authorizing legislation. Agreement on the Special Mission will set the stage for the GOL to seek parliamentary approval to deploy civilians. The exchange of letters and GOL approval will allow Lithuania's PRT Political Advisor (POLAD) to assume his duties in Chaghcharan, even in advance of Parliamentary approval. It will also enable the GOL to send civilian specialists to the PRT in the future.

14. (U) Lithuania established diplomatic relations with Afghanistan on March 31, 2005, but does not yet have an ambassador in Kabul. The proposed agreement designates the head of the Special Mission (the POLAD) as Charge d'Affairs Ad Interim. The annex to the agreement confers immunities and privileges on PRT personnel.

CROATIA CONSIDERS CONTRIBUTION TO CHAGHCHARAN PRT

15. (SBU) Kestutis Jankauskas, Director of the MFA's Security Policy Department, told us he had recently discussed with interlocutors in Zagreb the possibility of Croatia contributing to the Lithuanian-led PRT. The possibility under consideration is for a modest police or civilian deployment, probably numbering one to three individuals. Jankauskas said the Croatian government will make a final decision in late August or early September. He requested that the USG encourage the Government of Croatia to provide such a contribution.

COMMENT AND ACTION REQUEST

16. (SBU) Enabling Lithuania to deploy the civilian complement of the PRT clearly advances USG interests in Afghanistan -- and will be welcome news to the U.S. POLAD already on the ground. Post encourages the Department to raise this issue with appropriate Afghan Government officials, impressing upon them the importance to the Chaghcharan PRT of concluding an agreement soonest. Additionally, post requests Department consider encouraging the Croatian Government to participate in the Lithuanian-led PRT. A Croatian role, however modest, will supplement Lithuania's resources and will enhance the multinational character of the mission.

Mull